



# Compensatory Time Off for Travel

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## What are the Implications for Your Organization?

- Compensatory time for travel can be earned by all General Schedule (GS) employees as well as employees in senior level (SL) positions and senior scientific or professional (ST) positions.
- Members of the Senior Executive Service (SES) cannot earn compensatory time off for travel.
- There is no limit on the amount of compensatory time off for travel that an employee can earn.



## What are the Implications for Your Organization?

- Employees can earn comp time for travel when their time in a travel status, “is not otherwise compensable.” (In other words, they can earn this form of compensatory time only for time in a travel status when they cannot earn pay or regular comp time.)
- Compensatory time off for travel differs from other compensatory time in that an employee cannot be paid for it, even when they leave government service. For that reason, Federal agencies are required to keep two separate comp time accounts; one for regular comp time and one for travel comp time.



## What travel constitutes comp time earned?

- time actually spent traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station
- time spent traveling between two temporary duty stations
- “usual waiting time” that either precedes or interrupts such travel
- time spent traveling between the employee’s duty station (or work site) and a transportation terminal (e.g., an airport, bus station or train station)



## What travel DOES NOT constitute comp time earned?

- An unusually long waiting period either prior to departure or between actual periods of travel
- Travel on a Holiday (or an “in lieu of holiday”)
- Travel between permanent duty stations



## Subtracting Commuting Time

- An agency must deduct the hours an employee would have spent in normal home-to-work or work-to-home commuting from travel between the employee's home and a temporary duty station.
- If a transportation terminal (such as an airport) is located within the limits of the employees official duty station, the employee's travel time to and from the airport (outside regular duty hours) is considered to be equivalent to commuting time and is not creditable time in a travel status.



## Subtracting Commuting Time

- If the airport is located outside the limits of the employee's official duty station the travel time to and from the airport (outside regular working hours) is creditable time in a travel status , but it is subject to an offset for the time the employee would have spent in normal home to work or work to home commuting.



## What are the limits on use?

- Compensatory time off for travel does not count in applying the biweekly or annual premium pay limitations (pay caps).
- As a general rule, an employee has 26 pay periods to either use or lose their earned compensatory time off for travel. However, there are exceptions to this rule.





## What are the limits on use?

- If an employee fails to use his or her earned comp time for travel by the end of the 26th pay period after the pay period in which it was earned due to an “exigency of the service” beyond the employee’s control, an authorized agency official, at his or her sole and exclusive discretion, may extend the time limit for using such compensatory time off for travel for up to an additional 26 pay periods.



## What are the limits on use?

- Unused compensatory time off for travel will be held in abeyance for an employee who separates from the service, (or who is placed in a leave without pay status) and later returns following either:
  - separation or leave to perform service in the uniformed services and returns to service by exercising their reemployment right; or
  - following separation or leave without pay due to an on-the-job injury with entitlement to injury compensation under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81. In such cases, the employee must use all of the compensatory time off for travel by the 26th pay period following the pay period in which the employee returns to duty.



## What happens when an employee leaves Federal service?

- Employees forfeit all unused compensatory time off for travel when they leave the federal service. The law prohibits payment for unused compensatory time off for travel. Also, when an employee voluntarily transfers to another agency (i.e., an agency other than NASA) they must forfeit all of their unused compensatory time off for travel.

## How does this apply to employees who are on a first 40-hour tour?

- A first 40-hour tour of duty consists of the first 40 hours of an administrative work week that an employee works. Therefore, an employee on a first 40-hour tour does not begin to earn comp time for travel in any administrative work week until after they have worked 40 hours.



## Can an employee earn comp time for travel if they don't travel by the most direct route?

- The amount of comp time for travel an employee can earn is based upon what they should have earned if they had traveled by the most direct route **or** if they had traveled by a conveyance that was the least costly to the government. This is called a “constructive schedule.”
- The amount of comp time for travel the employee may earn for the time spent in a travel status outside of normal duty hours is limited to the amount of time they would have earned if they had followed the “constructive schedule.”



## What are the Supervisor's responsibilities?

- Employees must request permission from their supervisors to schedule the use of compensatory time off for travel just as they would when using annual leave or regular comp time.



## How do I record compensatory time off for travel?

- There are two hour types in WebTADS for recording compensatory time off for travel:
  - TCTE (Travel Comp Time Earned); and
  - TCTU (Travel Comp Time Used).
- These two hour types must be recorded in quarter hour (15 minute) increments.

## On-line Resources (Websites)

- The **final regulations**, (5 C.F.R. 550 Sections 1404 through 1409) were published in the Federal Register (Volume 72, Number 73) by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management on April 17, 2007. To see the final regulations go to:
- <http://frwebgate2.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WALSdocID=508635186486+0+0+0&WALSaction=retrieve>





## On-line Resources (Websites)

- **FAQs** - The U.S. Office of Personnel Management has published a set of questions and answers that help to clarify and explain the provisions of the interim regulations. To see the questions and answers go to:
- <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-03-att1.asp>
- **Examples** - OPM has also published some illustrative examples to help employees understand and apply the comp time for travel rules. Those examples can be found at:
- <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2005/2005-03-att2.asp>



## People to contact:

- If you have questions about compensatory time off for travel contact the human resources specialist in the Employee Services and Operations Office who supports your organization.